

On weekends he would hitch a ride to Shepherdstown with Charles "Cop" Shipley, who lived in the yellow house next to Trail's Chevron where David Malakoff and Amy Young now live. Shipley's father Bob was the first state trooper in Shepherdstown. His brother Kenneth was fire chief in Shepherdstown for many, many years and lived in the old King Street fire hall.

In 1941 Charles completed high school. He remembers that Jennings Randolph, then a congressman, was the commencement speaker. After graduation Charles came back to Shepherdstown. But at that time Shepherdstown didn't have many opportunities for a black man to make money, Charles says. You could maybe work in the apple orchard for Goldsborough and Skinner at 20 an hour or see if Shepherd had a laborer's job but that was about it.

Instead Charles decided to go to New York City with his friend C.J. Jackson. Jackson had New York relatives; he had an aunt who lived out in Mount Vernon, New York. Charles found a job in downtown Manhattan at 125th Street and Seventh Avenue. He started out as a dishwasher in a little restaurant. In six months he had decided it was not the job for him. He went to New Haven, Connecticut where he hoped to work for the Winchester Rifle Works. One of his former classmates worked there.

When that didn't transpire, Charles got a job in Ansonia at a big old country club where he would up in the kitchen. "I never boned so many turkeys in my life," he says ruefully. "Time to get on back home." Back home to the orchards and Shepherd College.

He was working at Shepherd for a regular salary of \$40 a month and board when he married his wife Ruby in May of 1942. It was during World War II and every able bodied man, black or white, was joining or being drafted to join the armed forces. "I was working at Shepherd when I got inducted at Fort Hayes in Columbus in December," he says. After induction Charles immediately left for Fort Hood, Texas where he was placed in Tank Destroyer Training.

During the Second World War the army was segregated. Entire divisions of black soldiers were commanded by white officers. Charles became part of the 827th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Company C, Third Platoon. But being commanded by white officers hardly mattered Charles remembers, because he had to answer to non-coms, who were black.

Charles was a private first class and the assistant gunner in a M-18 Tank Destroyer. He originally received training for tank warfare in Africa but in 1944 after the Allied invasion of Europe tank training changed.

The 827th was sent to Europe. Charles landed at Marseilles and he and his battalion took part in the invasion of Southern France. "In November, a couple of days after my birthday, I knew something was happening. Whole battalions of various companies formed. A communion service was held. For the first and only time I had communion in the army," he says.

The next couple of days they began moving north towards the front. Then the snows came. They were especially deep in Europe that year, he remembers. "They came up to your waist in some places," he says. Finally they reached Strasbourg, almost to the Sigfreid Line and headed towards Luxembourg.

On December 16, 1944 in the early morning Charles saw balls of fire and heard a roaring. It was a hot shell and he was in active combat for the first time. He admits he was scared, "You'd have to be a fool not to be," he says. He was right on the edge of the Battle of the Bulge.

His platoon moved into an area supporting the 79th Infantry and the all-white 42nd

Rainbow Division, MacArthur's old division. During a lull in the battle he and the others crawled out of their tank and black soldiers and white soldiers freely mingled. "You couldn't get more integrated than that," he says.

Charles observed one instance of death at close hand. He was just 25 yards from a Company B tank that was hit. He saw a soldier trying to come out over the gun turret (snow prevented escape from the bottom). He found out later the man died from injuries.

In early January the tide turned when the sun came out and U.S. ground forces received air support. Charles saw his first jet plane, a German one, at that time. It dropped one bomb, he says and was gone so fast he wondered what it was.

The war ended for Charles on October 3, 1945 at Fort Mead, Maryland where he was mustered out of the army with a good conduct medal and a honorable discharge.

Before his discharge, in August, he would not have believed he would return to civilian life so soon. He was on a ship enroute to the Pacific Theater when a voice over the PA system announced the end of the war and the ship turned around to dock in Boston harbor instead.

When he came back home to Shepherdstown, he and Ruby brought the house at 308 West German Street where they still live. He bought it for \$600. It was a duplex then but later the and Ruby converted it to a single family home. He worked in the orchards until 1946. All the time his wife kept urging him to go back to school on the G.I. Bill. There were no decent jobs to be found, he says.

In 1946 he was called to work as a janitor at the Army Hospital in Martinsburg. The 65 cents an hour he earned there was three times the 20 an hour he was making in the orchards and by now he and Ruby had four children. The Army Hospital was converted to the Newton D. Baker Veteran's Administration Hospital shortly after he began work and he put in an application to work for the federal government. Still Ruby was urging him to go back to school.

So in August of 1946 Charles registered for classes in business administration at Storer College. He selected a business administration major because his college advisor told him he would be eligible for a G.I. loan to set up his own business when he graduated. "But I had no particular business I was interested in," he says. "When I got out of school I had to get a job." So he switched to education and social studies.

The commencement speaker at his 1950 graduation was W.E.B. Du Bois, who had first come to Storer College in 1908, for a meeting of the Niagara Movement, the precursor of the N.A.A.C.P. That 1950 Storer class was the largest class ever graduated from Storer, Charles remembers.

In the second semester of 1951 Charles went back to school. Although he graduated with a Bachelor in Social Studies. Charles had not completed his professional studies. By the end of the summer session he had minors in business administration and physical education. During one summer school session he attended a class with a teacher at the black high school in Luray, Virginia, Andrew Jackson High School. The man's wife was principal of the school. Charles was offered a job as a teacher and football coach.

He had no car and no idea how he was going to get to Luray but the \$2,400 yearly salary was more than he had ever made. "I just knew I would get there," he says. At first he left his family behind and lived in a rented room but by November Charles had found a house for \$15 a month.

However, in 1952 Ruby became sick and she and the children went back to

Shepherdstown. Charles would come home on weekends by train getting in around midnight on Friday and leaving very early Monday mornings. It wasn't a very satisfactory arrangement and in 1956 he came back to Shepherdstown. He worked once again at the VA Center where he stayed until he retired in 1985 after sustaining his fourth heart attack.

Charles has never retired from public service though. He has served a total of eighteen years on the Shepherdstown Council. He first became a councilman in 1974 but took two years off between 1980 and 1982. He spearheaded the cleaning up of Back Alley after the alley became a dumping ground following the closing of the Town Dump on Rocky Street. And he was one of the founding members of the Shepherdstown Community Club which was active in the present youth center building until the mid 1980s.

The Shadyside School that Charles attended was closed in 1946. Shepherdstown blacks then went to the East Side School. That building now houses the Shepherdstown Day Care Center. Although the Brown vs. the Board of Education decision against segregation in public schools was handed down by the United States Supreme Court in 1954 Charles says schools in Shepherdstown were not integrated until the late 50s or early 60s.

Three of his six children attended segregated schools. The three older children, Rose, Barbara and Charles, attended Jefferson County's black high school, Page Jackson in Charles Town.

Only the three younger children, Leon, Rodney and Brenda, attended integrated schools in Shepherdstown. All three graduated from Shepherdstown High School.

#### TRIBUTE TO THE JULIA WEST HAMILTON LEAGUE, INC.

#### HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to The Julia West Hamilton League, Inc., which was formed in 1938, the outgrowth of 10 women who dared to dream. Mrs. Ellen V. Johns Britain, the organizer, believed that women joining together as a dedicated unit might accomplish some of the things that seemed impossible at that time, but could be helpful to the betterment of the community, education, youth and self.

Mr. Speaker the League was named to honor a great woman who gave unsparingly of her time, devotion and love to the causes of humanity, Mrs. Julia West Hamilton, who was a participating member of the League until her death. The League was incorporated in 1971. The first president was Mary EC Gregory. The League is currently led by Mary J. Thompson.

Mr. Speaker, The purpose of the League is (1) to promote benevolence, cultural and educational interests in the community; (2) to strive to gain new knowledge and skills of achieving better self-understanding, learning to interact more sensitively and honestly with others; (3) to encourage young people to aim early in life toward education, develop good character and find a useful place in society; and (4) to establish a monetary award known as the Julia West Hamilton Award. This award is presented to a student in each of the 14 senior high schools in Washington, DC and a four-year Julia West Hamilton Scholarship is

awarded to a recipient from one of the senior high schools every four years. To date, the League has provided over \$68,000 in student awards and scholarships.

Over the past 21 years the League has donated approximately \$73,500 to the Hospital for Sick Children and has supported Howard University's Sickle Cell Anemia Program. The League has also contributed to the Brigadier General West A. Hamilton Scholarship Fund of the Washington Club of Frontiers International, the United Negro College Fund, the Cardozo and Eastern High School bands and the Eastern High School Choir for travel abroad. Assistance is also provided to needy families at Thanksgiving and Christmas. The League holds lifetime memberships with the National Council of Negro Women and the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA. In 1980, the Ellen V. Johns Britain Award was established in honor of the founder of the Julia West Hamilton League, Inc. This award is presented for outstanding and dedicated services to a member of longstanding.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this August body join me in special tribute to the gentle ladies of The Julia West Hamilton League, Inc. whose motto, "THE ONLY GIFT IS A PORTION OF THYSELF" and good works, on the occasion of their 60th anniversary, are worthy to be praised.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, earlier today I missed one vote on H.R. 856, The United States-Puerto Rico Political Status Act, because I was attending the funeral of former Congressman Garner Shriver in Wichita Kansas. Had I been present I would have voted yes on rollcall No. 27.

I would request that my statement be placed in the appropriate location in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I discovered that without explanation, my vote was not recorded on Roll Call vote number 22, the Federal Agency Compliance/Civil Rights amendment. I was present for this vote and voted Yea.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT  
OF FRANK STRONA FROM THE  
NEW HAVEN POLICE DEPARTMENT,  
MARCH 4, 1998

##### HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Frank Strona, a devoted member of

the New Haven Police Department, who retired Saturday, February 28, 1998.

Providing for the protection and safety of our citizens from acts of violence is one of the fundamental duties of government. But government carries out this responsibility only through the work and dedication of people like Frank Strona. His extraordinary bravery and pride in carrying out his duties will serve as an example for police departments throughout Connecticut to strive towards.

Mr. Strona served in the New Haven Police Department for over thirty-five years. He is cherished as a friend and mentor to many junior officers, and many members of the community, including myself. His career began as a rookie cop. In a short time he became a motorcycle policeman, graduating from cruiser patrolman. He spent almost twenty of his thirty-five years as Dog Warden and Manager of the Mounted Police Regiment of the New Haven Police Department—keeping the regiment strong.

Second only to his loving family, Strona's distinguished career in public service has been the greatest source of pride in his life. This devotion and pride will be his lasting legacy. The members of the New Haven Police Department and the community of New Haven have all benefited from his unwavering commitment to the safety and security of our community. For this, we offer him our lasting gratitude and congratulations on his retirement.

#### TRIBUTE TO JOSEPH MEYER

##### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 4, 1998*

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a Northwest Indiana business pioneer and the founder of Bank Calumet, Joseph Meyer. Joseph was born in Wisconsin in 1878. As a youth, whenever he could, he traveled with his father who was a professional photographer. His father was particularly interested in photographing various aspects of nature and often took his son into fields and forests. The young Joseph soon learned a great deal about plants and nature in general. But this happy arrangement lasted only a few years because the father died when his son was not yet a teenager. As a result of the family's financial difficulties, Joseph was sent to an orphanage, where he received a technical-vocational education.

Upon graduation from high school, Joseph had to leave the orphanage. He went to Milwaukee where he lived with a grandmother, who provided room and board which enabled young Joseph to take a low paying job in the printing industry. He recognized that he needed practical experience before he could go out on his own.

Eventually, he felt he had enough experience, so with a small loan from his grandmother, he set up his own print shop in her basement. Slowly he accumulated enough savings to open his own print shop on East Water Street. He was a good printer, but not yet a good financial manager and he did not know how to locate a financial advisor. Moreover, Milwaukee was suffering from a recession at that time. Finally, he was out of money and had to close his shop. His first business venture, therefore, was a failure.

Joseph Meyer then moved to Chicago, where printers were in demand, and obtained a job with a large industrial printer until it was shut down by a long and violent strike. Next he took a job in the print department of The Hammond Times.

But the desire to have his own business was strong. By saving everything he could from his job at the paper and with a small bank loan, he was able to afford an old printing press which had to share space in his modest home with his wife and young family. Joseph soon heard about crooked gaming devices and learned how these machines were tampered with to cheat the public. So in 1908, he wrote a short book exposing this scheme and printed it himself—two pages at a time.

This literary effort was well received and very profitable. His initial thought was to expand his printing business, but he remembered his failed print shop back in Milwaukee. He realized that his next business would have to be guided by a plan and that he would need help with the financial side.

In thinking about his skills, he knew he had two strengths. He knew a lot about printing; after all, that's what he had been doing for several years. But he also knew a great deal about nature and plants. Over the years, he had built on the basic knowledge he had gained from those early field trips with his father. He became interested in the curative power of native plants and the advantages of natural substances as dietary supplements. For his life's work, he decided it made sense to combine both these talents—his knowledge of printing and his love of nature.

He grew and harvested plants in the vacant land around his Hammond house, on land that no one seemed to care about at the time. Marketing of these health foods and medical items would be through a catalog. Since he would print the catalog himself, his profit would be enhanced. He mobilized his eight children and taught them to distinguish the valuable plants from ordinary weeds and had them help in the harvesting.

His children were also put to work in the family dining room, assembly-line fashion, to fold and bind the catalog. Eventually, he was able to purchase fertile land to grow the plants he needed and in 1925 construct a handsome Tudor style building to process and manufacture his products. That building still stands among the Borman Expressway near Calumet Avenue. In a few years, this business, then and now known as the Indiana Botanic Gardens, grew larger and his catalog was sent first throughout the Midwest and later all over the country. Today, Indiana Botanic Gardens, which is now located in Hobart, continues to thrive under the direction of a Joseph Meyer descendant.

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, the country had slipped into a very severe economic downturn. Many businesses closed. But this time, Joe Meyer's business did not fail. In fact, the Botanic Gardens continued to expand. It turned out that the herb and health food business was largely recession proof. His direct-from-the-manufacturer mail order business provided products at a lower price than his competitors, and his home remedies were cheaper and more readily available than regular medical doctors.

But he did have one serious problem. The economic downturn was so severe that he couldn't find a sound yet convenient financial